**Reply of the Republic of Slovenia to the questionnaire on the right of persons with disabilities to participation in decision making**

1. *Please provide information on the legislative and policy framework in place in your country related to the status, establishment, resourcing, and functioning of representative organizations of persons with disabilities at the national, regional and local levels;*

In 2002 Slovenian parliament adopted Persons with disabilities organizations act (Official Journal of RS, 108/2002, hereinafter; Act). The status, scope of work, financing and property of disabled persons’ organizations are regulated in the Act (Article 1).

According to the Act, the key objectives of disability organizations’ activities are the promotion of the human rights of persons with disabilities, non-discrimination of persons with disabilities, promotion of integration into society and participation in everyday life (Article 10). Also important are the provisions of Articles 19 and 26 of the Act that list the tasks of representative disability organizations and the National Council of Disability Organizations; these include representing disabled persons and their interests in dialogue with authorities at the national and international levels and proposing, in accordance with regulations, representatives of disabled persons for working bodies in national and other authorities.

1. *Please provide information on existing legislation and policies aimed at ensuring that persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, including children with disabilities, are consulted and involved in decision-making processes that directly or indirectly concern them;*

Article 4 of the Act regulates that disabled persons’ organizations shall participate in creating national policies and measures for ensuring equal opportunities and equal treat­ment of disabled persons. National authorities are obliged to consult disabled per­sons’ organizations in all matters referred to in the preceding paragraph.

1. *Please provide information on any consultative body or mechanism established to consult and engage with representative organizations of persons with disabilities, including information about their composition, criteria for membership (nomination, appointment, election, etc.) and functioning;*

Equalization of Opportunities for persons with disabilities Act (Official Journal of RS, No. 194/2010, 50/2014) in Article 28 regulates the status, establishment, resourcing, and functioning of the Council for Persons with Disabilities of the Republic of Slovenia (hereinafter: Council).

The Council is an independent tripartite body, composed of representatives of representative organizations of persons with disabilities, representatives of professional institutions in the field of disability policy and representatives of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia. Each party shall nominate seven members for the term of office of four years, as follows:

* the National Council of Disabled People's Organizations of Slovenia shall appoint seven representatives of all representative and other organizations of persons with disabilities functioning at the level of the state;
* institutions engaged in the disability policy shall nominate seven representatives, namely the Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia, the Pension and Disability Insurance, University rehabilitation institute of the Republic of Slovenia – Soča, the Institute, the Social Protection Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, the Employment Service of Slovenia, the Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities of the Republic of Slovenia and the Association of Vocational Rehabilitation Providers of the Republic of Slovenia;
* the Government of the Republic of Slovenia shall nominate seven representatives, appointed by the ministry responsible for the protection of persons with disabilities, the ministry responsible for education and sport, the ministry responsible for health, the ministry responsible for the environment and spatial planning, the ministry responsible for culture, the ministry responsible for finance, while a representative of higher education institutions shall be nominated by the ministry responsible for higher education, science and technology.

The primary tasks of the Council shall include the following:

* to monitor the development and implementation of programmes in the field of protection of persons with disabilities and to provide initiatives for their development and implementation;
* to deliver opinions to proposers of laws and regulations applicable to the protection of persons with disabilities during public discussion;
* to participate in drawing up reports on the implementation of national programmes and provide opinion thereon;
* to provide initiatives, proposals and recommendations concerning the protection of persons with disabilities;
* to facilitate cooperation among ministries, professional institutions and organizations of persons with disabilities;
* to promote and monitor the implementation of the Act Ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Official Gazette of RS – International Treaties,No. 10/2008);
* to carry out other tasks in accordance with the adopted rules of operation of the Council.

Funds for the work of the Council shall be provided from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia.

1. *Please provide information on the efforts undertaken at national, regional and/or local levels to strengthen the capacity of representative organizations of persons with disabilities, in order to facilitate their participation in legislative, policy and other decision-making processes;*

At national level, as a rule according to Article 26 of the Act, disability organization participate in legislative and policy decision – making processes via National Council of Disability Organizations – paragraph 2 of the Article 2 6 regulates that “the National Council shall propose, in line with regulations, common representatives of disabled persons for the authorities of state and other public institutions and for the authorities of international organizations and associations, and carry out other mutually agreed activities”.

At local level, according to Article 25 of the Equalization of Opportunities for persons with disabilities Act, »local self-government bodies, … shall adopt regulatory measures and guidelines in accordance with their respective competencies and shall educate employees with a view to creating conditions for equal treatment of persons with disabilities by raising public awareness and monitoring the social status of persons with disabilities” Several local communities has established local councils for persons with disabilities which have similar tasks as the national council.

As a good practice, we would like to mention a project entitled "A Municipality Tailored to the Needs of People with Disabilities", which encourages municipalities to respond actively to the needs of citizens with disabilities and is carried out by the Slovenian Association of Disabled Workers. The main purpose of the project follows the general principle of the Convention of the right of persons with disabilities, which is full and effective participation and inclusion of people with disabilities into society. By the end of 2014, this distinction had been awarded to 19 municipalities, including the capital city. The municipalities which have been awarded this title have to analyze the situation of people with disabilities together with their local disability organizations, adopt action programs and established local council for persons with disabilities.

1. *Please explain whether and how persons with disabilities participate in monitoring the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (art. 33, para. 3), and in the nomination of experts to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (art. 34, para. 3);*

Equalization of Opportunities for persons with disabilities Act (Official Journal of RS, No. 194/2010, 50/2014) in Article 28 regulates the status, establishment, resourcing, and functioning of the Council. One of the primary tasks of the Council ids to promote and monitor the implementation of the Council. The aforesaid Council has therefore been designated by the Republic of Slovenia as the independent mechanism referred to in Paragraph 2 of Article 33 of the Convention.

1. *Please identify the main challenges faced by the diversity of persons with disabilities in participating in mainstream and disability-specific decision-making processes at the national, regional and local levels, including challenges faced by persons who experience multiple discrimination (e.g., on the basis of disability, age, gender, ethnic origin, geographical location).*

One of the key challenges is how to raise awareness among all national and local authorities to include disability organizations in drafting of regulations and policies.

Next, the issue of reasonable accommodation – how to ensure the access to information for persons with sensory disabilities, intellectual disabilities or to persons with disabilities from ethnic minorities.